

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 07894 091010Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 7894

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT TS

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA VISITS PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA
IN GENEVA

RE: TUNIS 7788, TUNIS 7166

1. ON NOVEMBER 6, PRIME MINISTER NEDI NOUIRA MET WITH PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA IN GENEVA. GOT MEDIA GAVE WIDE COVERAGE TO VISIT AND ANNOUNCED THAT THE TWO DISCUSSED DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, PARTICULARLY THE SITUATION IN LEBANON AFTER THE RIYADH AND CAIRO SUMMITS AND THE U.S. ELECTIONS. NOUIRA ACCOMPANIED BOURGUIBA ON A WALK AND ANNOUNCED TO PRESS AFTER THEIR MEETING THAT THE PRESIDENT'S HEALTH IS IN CONSTAND IMPROVEMENT. EVENING TV NEWS NOVEMBER 6 SHOWED FILM OF THIS WALK AND BRIEF CLIP OF BOURGUIBA AND NOUIRA IN CONVERSATION.

NOVEMBER 8 ISSUE OF DESTOURIAN SOCIALIST PARTY'S WEEKLY MAGAZINE DIALOGUE ALSO CARRIED ON FIRST PAGE FULL-PAGE PHOTO OF BOURGUIBA AND NOUIRA TAKEN IN GENEVA WITH CAPTION "BOURGUIBA VA BIEN."

2. NOUIRA'S CALL ON BOURGUIBA IS THE FIRST PUBLICALLY REPORTED MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT WITH A GOT OFFICIAL SINCE OIS TREATMENT IN GENEVA BEGAN ON OCTOBER 11. WE UNDERSTAND CHATTY ALSO VISITED PRESIDENT IN GENEVA FOLLOWING CAIRO SUMMIT, AND OTHER OFFICIALS REPORTEDLY GO TO SWITZERLAND FREQUENTLY. THESE CONTACTS HAVE NOT BEEN NOTED IN PRESS HOWEVER. PUBLICITY GIVEN
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PAGE 02 TUNIS 07894 091010Z

NOUIRA'S TRIP TO GENEVE WAS UNDOUBTEDLY INTENDED TO SHOW

TUNISIAN PUBLIC THAT BOURGUIBA IS AMBULATORY AND NOT AS
SERIOUSLY ILL AS THE TUNIS RUMOR MILL IS PICTURING HIM.

3. NOUIRA MEETING WITH BOURGUIBA AND PUBLICITY GIVEN
IT BY GOT MEDIA APPEAR TO CORROBATE WITH INFORMATION
WE HAVE RECEIVED THAT BOURGUIBA IS RESPONDING TO TREATMENT
IN GENEVA. HIS APPEARANCE ON TELEVISION WAS ABOUT THE
SAME AS IT HAS BEEN IN RECENT MONTHS.
MULCAHY

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